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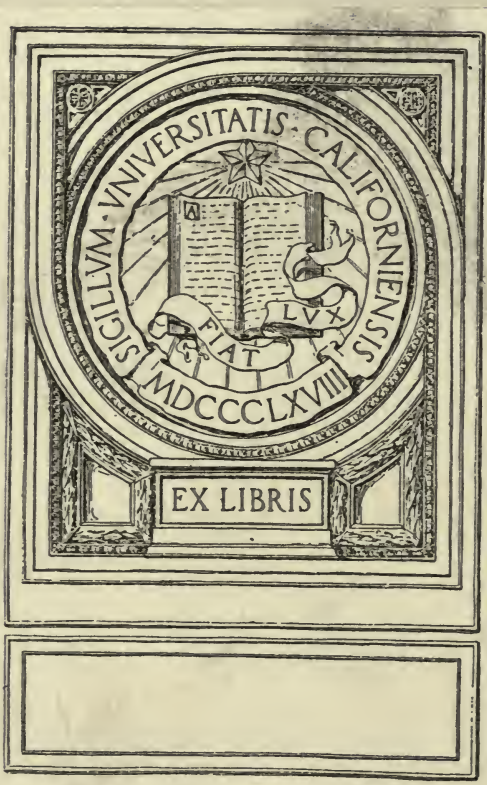
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# CAMP LIBERTY

## A Farm Cadet Experiment

Bureau *of* Educational Experiments
16 West 8th Street, New York
1918

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# INTRODUCTION

A year ago in our folder, "Farm Labor and Boy Camps," we summarized the results of a previous inquiry concerning the function of the labor camp in relation to the enlistment of city boys for work on farms. The recommendations made then were of necessity a priori. They represented a consensus of opinion on the part of leaders experienced in questions of agriculture, of labor and of education. They were put forth in the hope that they might prove of value to those about to undertake the pioneer experiments in this field.

To-day the nation has back of it a season of these pioneer experiments and they should furnish a degree of guidance for future effort of the kind. To contribute in some measure to the general fund of experience we publish the following report of Camp Liberty, a farm labor experiment in which twenty-five young men of New York City, the farmers of a New York State community and the Bureau of Educational Experiments co-operated in the summer of 1917.

# Camp Liberty

## A Farm Cadet Experiment

Can the boys' camp for farm labor justify itself as an economic enterprise and at the same time provide an experience sufficiently rich in educational value to make it a desirable addition to our school institutions? This was the problem undertaken at Camp Liberty, and as the reader of the following pages will realize, certain important factors in the experiment's success were due not to chance but to careful preliminary study and arrangement.

The general plan outlined previously in the folder, "Farm Labor and Boy Camps," was taken as the basis of organization, subject to such modifications as circumstances and experience might dictate. The necessary financial backing, selection of a director, choice of the farm community, the personnel and equipment of the camp were further responsibilities assumed by the Bureau of Educational Experiments, and represented in this initial season an outlay of time, effort and expense greater than is likely to be needed for any subsequent undertaking of the kind. Before considering the descriptive report of the director, we submit a few words as to our experience with regard to each of these.

### *The Farm Community*

The average American of the city will probably accept the farm community pictured in Mr. Artman's report as a matter of course. It will be his idea of an eastern farming section, a little more prosperous than many perhaps, but to his mind typical. To offset this misconception it may be well to describe among the many different types of community within New York State, three which bid for boy camps through the Farm Cadet Bureau of the Military Training Commission last spring, not one of which could have furnished the environment for a camp whose success was to be measured by any standard save increased production.

I. The trucking section accustomed to a large supply of seasonal labor, where the unskilled hand is taught one operation only and the

WHEN THEY ARRIVED SOME OF THE BOYS DID NOT KNOW THAT FARMERS USE HORSES

factory system of labor division has been adapted to the growers' needs. So far as work on the soil can be reduced to what Dean Schneider calls "enervating occupation," it has been accomplished in such sections.

II. The one crop section where partial or total failure of the yield may stop employment at any time.

III. The section where foreign tenants rent out small holdings from the native owners and depend on seasonal labor for their help. The American high school boy in the employ and under the instruction of say, a Polack peasant, may not be an entirely impossible situation so far as increased production goes, but the chances are all against it, and success from the educational standpoint is surely impossible.

Both educational and economic considerations demand a region of diversified farming, giving promise of a variety of experience and fairly continuous work throughout the season. As a matter of educational consideration moreover, it is of no small importance that the city youth shall have as his initial experience of country life a community where farm life and conditions may be seen to good advantage, where life is fairly prosperous, enterprising, American.

Another factor of great importance must always be the initial attitude of the farm community toward the camp. Camp Liberty was established at the invitation of one or two leading farmers, and their co-operation in furnishing housing facilities and in giving employment through the first days when the camp was establishing its reputation in the community at large was invaluable.

## *The Camp Director*

Of first importance in any such enterprise is the choice of a director. The ideal leader has been aptly described as a being who must be at once "socially, pedagogically and agriculturally minded," and the same writer warns us that few men exist who are not "born short" in one or another of these directions.*

A visitor to Camp Liberty at the end of the season wrote as follows: "All credit is due to Mr. Artman, the camp director, for having made the experience of the boys educative as well as productive. The boys while doing drudgery were treated by Mr. Artman as intelligent fellows with brains as capable as were their hands; capable of giving intelligent consideration to the problems they were engaged in. While

QUARTERS, ORIGINALLY INTENDED FOR LABORERS' FAMILIES, WERE DONATED BY A FARMER

as a man with farming experience he was sensitive to the farmers' needs and appreciative of what they had to contend with, he also understood the boys. He made friends with farmers and created a good spirit in the neighborhood and a friendly relation with the camp."

Among the demands on the director were the initial arrangements with the farm community, responsibility for problems of housing and sanitation, purchase of equipment and supplies, all the concrete details in fact, as well as the recruiting of the camp members. Such a problem calls for experience and native good judgment in practical affairs and it was the good fortune of Camp Liberty that its leader had both at his command.

*"Our Schools in War Time and After," by Dr. Arthur D. Dean.

HOT AND TIRESOME, BUT NOT SO BAD WHEN THERE'S A BUNCH WORKING!

In his own opinion, supervision of the right sort "is not so much a matter of technical training as of common sense. It is plain from the summer's experience that the chief need in employing the city boys to do farm work, is to have a 'go-between' who can serve as the connecting link between the farmer who does not understand the boy from the city, and the city boy who has not the right attitude towards farm work. These can be brought together by patient and understanding treatment on both sides."

## *Personnel of the Camp*

In recruiting the members, every effort was made to discourage the unlikely volunteer. The distance of the camp from home and a clear explanation of conditions to be expected, hard work and rough living, served to eliminate in most cases those who did not take the project seriously, yet in spite of this precaution, two serious misfits did reach camp and after a fair trial had to be dismissed. One or two others stayed but a brief period and left voluntarily.

The average age of the camp members was somewhat above that in the majority of farm camps and this fact was an undoubted asset, as boys of greater maturity were physically better able to do the hard work and were generally steadier and more self reliant. The influence of the four college men was another asset and to their leadership was largely due the

excellent camp spirit that prevailed. They set standards of living as well as of work.

## *Financial Assistance*

One of the chief problems confronting advocates of the boy camp for farm labor is the financial one. The expenses fall naturally under three classes:

Cost of supervision and initial arrangements.
Housing and equipment.
Maintenance—commissariat, cook's wages, etc.

At Camp Liberty expenditures under the first head were met by the Bureau of Educational Experiments, with the exception of the general supervision provided by the state government and the services rendered by the Farm Cadet Bureau of the New York Military Training Commission in finding a farm community suitable for the camp.

The items under "initial arrangements" were for traveling expenses. To ensure success in a first venture a number of localities were visited and their possibilities appraised. These, as well as the expenses incurred for supervision, were greater than would be considered necessary again.

For a budget covering items in this first class of expenses we can recommend:

Salary of Director, $75 to $100 per month.
The Director to pay his board at the camp at regular pro rata rate.
Director's Fund, $50 to $75. To be used for:
*Initial expenses* in locating camp.
*Books, maps, etc.,* needed in camp.
This item at Camp Liberty was $11.50.
*Emergency use,* as in paying carfare of boys dismissed from camp.
*Carfare advanced* in case of boys needing it.

Last year when experiments of the kind were first discussed, many advocates of the "self-supporting" camp made themselves heard. Belief was expressed that the boy campers should assume all the camp obligations and that any financial assistance given should resolve itself into a mere loan or underwriting of expenses. Whatever advantages or disadvantages such an arrangement presents, when the camp is considered only from the economic standpoint as a unit organized to increase pro-

duction, its fallacies are apparent when the educational aspects of the situation are considered, and the enterprise is viewed as an addition to our school institutions providing a wider field of experience and training for city youth. Equally evident, too, are the objections to classing the costs of supervision with the housing facilities and asking the farm community to assume them. The practical and desirable arrangement is undoubtedly the one where this part of the budget is borne by a "party of the third part," in our case a private organization, but conceivably an agency such as a city school system or state department of education.

CAMP PROVIDED LUNCHEON TO RELIEVE THE FARMER'S KITCHEN OF THAT BOTHER

## *Housing and Equipment*

Housing was furnished by a member of the farm community. Equipment for thirty campers was supplied by the Bureau of Educational Experiments; the items, including stove, kitchen utensils and serving dishes, cots, tables, chairs, are as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| Equipment | $225.95 |
| Cartage | 69.41 |
| Automobile | 369.46 |
| Total | $664.82 |

The policy in providing equipment was that it should be simple but adequate. Mattresses, the bath tub, the automobile, may not have been absolute necessities in the last analysis, but their contribution to health, contentment and efficiency is evident. The director believes an

improvement on the tub would have been a crude shower, and recommends that apparatus for one be purchased another time and installed by the boys.

As for the automobile, ours was a second-hand car and therefore a "white elephant" at the end of the season. A new Ford costing $400 could have been sold at the end of the few weeks' session for nearly its full value, and the total budget for equipment thus reduced approximately to $300.

A telephone should be added to the list of essential items in the equipment of a subsequent camp; also an ice box or cold cellar. An ice box was constructed by the boys last summer at an outlay of five dollars.

While there is no such serious objection to levying on the earnings of the camp members for costs of equipment as is to be found in the case of supervision expenses, it is hard to see what advantage there may be in such an arrangement. Aside from any practical difficulties the boys might have in securing $300 to $700 for the initial outlay, problems of individual assessment and responsibility and the final disposition of property held in common at the end of the brief camp season, are bound to be knotty questions. Besides, as will be shown later, the boys' margin of profits was not so great at the summer's end as to warrant any unnecessary reduction. The farm camp offers only moderate wages at best and makes physical exactions that are a real hardship to the city boy, salutary though they may be. If it is to compete at all with other opportunities for earning in vacation time, it seems the part of wisdom that its demands on the boys' earnings should be reduced so far as possible.

There seems no reason, however, why the camp equipment as well as the housing facilities could not be provided by the farm community, or by a group of farmers, and rented to the camp at a fair return on the investment. The additional expense to the average boy would be small and this part of the budget consequently reduced to a "self-supporting" basis. A popular objection to such a plan is rejected by Dr. Dean when he says: "Some may say that the city boy will not leave country property in good shape, but experience so far has shown that the boys have left things better than they found them."

A note here as to personal equipment may be of interest. At Camp Liberty each boy brought:

2 blankets
1 comforter
A pillow, if desired
Set of eating utensils—enamel plate, cup, fork. knife and spoon

Towels and change of underwear
Toilet conveniences
Old clothes for work.

From time to time during the season the camp voted to purchase additional articles wanted by the boys and recognized by them as "luxuries." Responsibility for such purchases was assumed by the campers, and a highly successful minstrel show given toward the end of the season netted $35 for these expenditures.

## *Commissariat*

This part of the budget was met by the camp members. After paying all costs of supplies, wages of the cook at $40 a month and her fare to camp, a surplus of $10 was returned to the general fund.

The average daily expenditure for each member was 63 cents (this includes cook's services). The camp fare was simple and hearty and the testimony of several visitors corroborates Mr. Artman's estimate that it was excellent in quality and variety.

Supplies were bought locally and credit at the beginning of the season was easily secured through the farmers interested. As the camp did not begin until the first of July it was too late to undertake a garden.

JEAN LEE HUNT.

# Camp Liberty

## A Descriptive Report

The location of Camp Liberty in the central part of New York State was chosen because it was in a region where farm work gave promise of being varied and continuous throughout the summer, with conditions typical of the general farming regions that make up the bulk of the agriculture of the State. Diversified farming is the rule in this section, and many of the crops grown extensively require hand work—cabbage, corn and beans to hoe, carrots to weed, celery to plant, cherries to pick, apples to thin, and so on. Besides the need for help to care for these special crops, haying, harvesting, cultivating and threshing demanded more help than was supplied locally.

The quarters, provided by a large farmer in the neighborhood, consisted of a one-story wooden "long-house" or barracks, about 120 by 20 feet, divided into eight two-room apartments. It had been intended to house the families of Italian laborers when built in the fall of 1916, but as it had never been occupied, it was a clean new building when Camp opened, admirably adapted for a farm labor camp. The building was situated at the base of a hill on ground sloping slightly towards a wooded swamp, a quarter-mile distant. In this respect the location was not ideal. The first boys, who arrived after a period of rain, at once named the place "Camp Mud." Though the site was low, the air drainage was excellent, pure drinking water was available in abundance, and the health of the campers was good throughout the summer

These quarters were furnished without charge by the proprietor with the understanding that his requests for labor to weed his carrots should have first consideration. A nearby pile of logs and saplings furnished fuel, which had to be cut as needed by the members of the camp. Water for drinking and cooking had to be carried quite a distance from a well at a neighboring farmhouse, and this was a good deal of a chore. For washing there was another well about 150 yards distant where all members of the camp community washed and bathed. A porcelain bathtub was installed, with an enclosure for bathing, and this was popular at the end of a hot day's work in the fields. But the swimming-hole in Flint

Creek, a mile west of camp, was more appealing, and hikes to this refreshing spot for a bath and swim were more frequent than tub baths.

Each camper was charged five dollars a week for his board and twenty-five cents a week for his washing, which was done by a neighboring woman. Particular pains were taken to provide well-cooked food in abundance, and to the cook is due a great deal of credit for keeping up the spirit of the camp through her untiring efforts to provide abundant and appetizing food. Accustomed to cooking for students in a college town, she accepted the rough living and modest wage at Camp Liberty as an opportunity to "do her bit." For companionship she brought with her a little niece who shared her cabin and helped her about her work. Her schedule began at four A. M., when she rose to prepare the lunch pails. It was a uniform rule of the camp to send out luncheon for each worker, so that no farmer would have the additional burden of providing dinners.

Twenty-seven older boys and young men were enrolled during the season, but the experiment really included only twenty-three throughout the summer; the other four were in camp less than two weeks. They were for the most part students from New York City high schools, enlisted for the camp through the Farm Service Office at Columbia University by means of meetings of students at different high schools in New York City, and from the office of the State Military Training Commis-

THE BOYS HAD TO LEARN THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A BEET AND A BURDOCK

sion in New York City. Four were college students, twelve came from high schools, one came from Mount Hermon Preparatory School and six were employed in business in New York City. Twenty lived in Greater New York and three in New Jersey. Nineteen were born in the United States, one in Sweden, one in Austria, one in Russia, one in Turkey. Four of the group were 21 years of age or over, and three were under 16 years. Eighteen had had no previous farm experience at all; five of them had had short experience of from two weeks to a month.

Most of the boys did not know the difference between a wheat-field and a meadow when they came to camp. One of the local newspapers told the truth when it said the boys at the camp couldn't tell the difference between a radish and a cabbage plant. On the train to camp one boy asked if the farmers used horses in that region. Another asked if any of the farmers kept cows. Three of them had never been in a row-boat. In general alertness, however, the group of campers was probably above the average. They were carefully chosen from a large number, and were given to understand that in going to camp they would find real, hard work, and that much was expected of them. In enlisting the members for the camp the appeal was made on the three-fold basis of an opportunity to render patriotic service, to learn to do productive farm work, and to earn a fair income for the summer amidst healthful surroundings. Any who did not want to do hard work and to put up cheerfully with rough living conditions were invited to remain at home in New York City. The chosen boys were thus made to feel that they belonged to a picked group, and that they were depended upon to carry through the experiment successfully.

Camp opened June 26th and continued until September 15th, though after September 1st all but ten had to return for the opening of school.

The boys worked in the fields ten hours a day. Their daily program was as follows: Rise at 5:30, breakfast at 6:00, ready to leave camp with dinner pails for work, 6:40; at the place of work, 7:00 A. M.; noon hour for lunch in field, 12:00 to 1:00; quit work at 6:00 P. M.; supper at 7:00; retire at 9:00 P. M. The farmers came to camp in the morning for the boys usually with automobiles, and brought them back at night, except where the work was near the camp. If the trip to work in the morning took longer than fifteen minutes it was taken on the employer's time.

At the beginning of the season the workers were divided into two classes according to proficiency. The proficient ones were paid two dollars a day; those less active and alert received a dollar and a half. But after a few weeks all were earning two dollars a day. The incentive

of the higher pay stimulated endeavor so that the inferior ones did their best to come up to the standard of the others.

As soon as the farmers in the neighborhood learned that help could be secured, they came to the camp and made more calls for help than could be answered. The unusual rainy weather of the spring and early summer had retarded farm work so much that by July first farm work was three weeks behind; planting, cultivating and weeding crowded in upon haying and harvest. Consequently there was a great rush of farm work throughout the summer which continued longer than would be the case in an ordinary summer. Almost no active effort was made to secure places for the boys to work. As soon as one man was through using them, another was waiting for help. In fact it was frequently necessary to cut down the usual number to certain employers in order to help meet the demand from others. For it was the policy of the camp to serve as large a number of farmers in the neighborhood as possible.

In most cases the employers had some experienced person working with the boys. Frequently the camp director went out with the boys and worked here and there with them, showing them the most effective way to apply their efforts. This increased the boys' interest in the work and kept them from lagging. The camp management sought also to give each worker a variety of work to do, for two reasons. Better work and more work was done when there was a change from one kind to another at frequent intervals—as often as every two or three days. And the workers learned to do a greater variety of operations. This effort to provide variety of experience did not fit into the farmer's scheme as well as it did into the program of the camp. The farmer, whose dominant interest was to get done the necessary work of caring for his crops, wanted to keep his workers busy at the kind of work which he had taken time to show them how to do and in which they had developed a degree of proficiency.

All of the workers had their introduction to the farm work for the summer in a great carrot field of some thirty or forty acres, which was weeded twice. This work had to be done first, as it was the understanding that Mr. ————'s carrots should be weeded before the boys went to work for others in the neighborhood. Getting down on their hands and knees for ten hours under the hot sun was a pretty stern test of their industry and of their purpose to "make good." The work was well done, however, though at the end it went slowly. It was followed by a period of hoeing—corn and beans, and later on cabbage and potatoes. Several of the workers were employed to pull cabbage plants and to transplant cabbage. Three of the campers were engaged

in work on muck land for some three weeks, transplanting celery and hoeing and blocking lettuce.

Weeding beets, pitching hay, harvesting wheat and oats and barley, pulling mustard, picking cherries, moving ladders for cherry pickers, thinning apples, hauling stone, threshing, cultivating, painting, picking pears, clearing woodland—these are some of the other kinds of work done during the summer. There was a progression of work through the growing season in which the processes of growth and the varied farming operations could be observed at first hand. The campers thus were able to learn many aspects of farm life by actual experience. They worked for thirty-five different employers, though most of the work was done for ten or twelve of these. The number employed by each farmer varied from one to twenty and the length of time varied all the way

THE TIN BASIN SUPPLEMENTED THE SWIMMIN' HOLE IN THE CREEK

from one day to six weeks. The largest number employed by one man was used for weeding carrots. For the most part the workers went out by twos and fours and helped a farmer for a few days until his particular kind of work was finished. In this way they had a broad variety of experiences and learned to know several farmers personally and intimately.

Payments for labor were made by the employers not to the individual boys but to the camp director. It was understood that settlement should be made at the end of each week. Board and washing charges were deducted from the amount due to each worker, and a dollar a week was given him for personal expenditures. The balance was deposited in the bank to his credit and paid to him when he left camp or upon order

from his parents. The net earnings for the summer varied with the different individuals according to the regularity with which they worked. Some of the boys who worked straight through the ten weeks, missing hardly a day, had over fifty dollars to their credit when they left for home. Most of the boys had between twenty and forty dollars coming to them.

The management of the camp community was left largely to the members themselves. Few rules were imposed. Each one was made to feel his responsibility and that the best was expected from him. The response was splendid As a means for promoting harmony and for giving expression and development to the individual members, the plan of self-government was a positive success.

At the opening of camp they drew up a constitution and by-laws, regular officers were chosen, and an executive committee was elected with authority to administer the rules which the camp had voted upon itself.

The group was divided into squads of four members each, each squad in turn to look after the daily camp duties, such as cutting the wood, carrying the necessary water for the kitchen, setting up and clearing and serving table and going after the milk. These chores were no inconsiderable task for fellows who were putting in ten hours of hard work in the field each day, to many of whom this was the first experience at regular hard manual labor, but the co-operation was good and the tasks were cheerfully performed.

Self-government the writer regards as one of the vital factors of success in administration of such farm labor camps, even aside from its evident educational importance. The freedom from fixed rules and formal regulations appealed strongly to the boys and undoubtedly had much to do with their co-operation. It gave the camp something of the club spirit, an *esprit de corps,* which made the life of the fellows together glad and enjoyable, and the social discipline and self-development from learning to do good "team work" had a marked influence on those who lived together and shared their household responsibilities during the summer. The spirit of comradeship and of mutual helpfulness that grew up was certainly a worth while result.

It was part of the original plan in organizing the camp to emphasize the educational nature of the undertaking by means of outlined talks and group discussions of farm operations and of the basic principles of agriculture. This plan was followed in part, but it was found that the great amount of information secured on hikes and while at work, in conversations with farmers and discussions in camp at the close of the day served to give an understanding of prevailing methods, problems

of production and of marketing, farm losses and profits, and the social conditions of the country as compared with the city.

To start inquiry and stimulate observation, collections of the commonest weeds were begun, the boys bringing home specimens as they came across them in their work, and a list was kept of the different kinds of birds that were seen and identified. Copies of the Country Gentleman, several authoritative books on farm topics, such as Warren's Farm Management, Weld's Marketing Farm Produce, a text book with colored plates of the common farm weeds, and the Cornell Rural School Leaflets were provided. A soil map of the county, and tables of the labor costs of different farm crops, were posted on the walls of the dining-room, which served as a reading room in the evenings and on Sundays. This reading matter received considerable attention. But the days were too full of active doings and the evenings too welcome for relaxation after the day's toil to give much inducement to reading.

The experiment showed that boys can have a thoroughly good time and be useful economic factors too. To be in the ranks of the producers and have a share in meeting the nation's needs developed a sense of self-respect among the camp members. They learned to do manual work carefully and well. The outdoor life built up their bodies so that they returned to the city with hardened muscles and increased weight, and minds refreshed.

The summer's experience resulted in a regard and appreciation of farm life and of the satisfaction of the country. The boys found that the traditional attitude towards farming is far from the intelligent one. In their work, daily contact brought familiarity with farm life and showed attractive features about living and working in the country that could not have been acquired so well in any other way. It is believed that the summer's experience brought these city fellows to understand in a sympathetic way the farmer's point of view. In doing this it accomplished one of the chief purposes for which the camp was established.

Charles E. Artman,
*Camp Director.*

# COMMENT AND EVALUATION

Properly to evaluate the experience of Camp Liberty, one must keep in mind the two-fold nature of the problem undertaken and consider separately the economic and the educational results of the enterprise. The irritating factors and elements of dissatisfaction felt by all concerned in the experiment were for the most part on the economic side. They were inherent in the situation and would undoubtedly be experienced again.

The boys' standpoint is described in the following report of a committee member from the Bureau of Educational Experiments:

"When I visited the camp the first day of September, I had an informal conference with the boys. Their discussion of their experience during the summer, as well as their discussion of the general questions involved in farm labor, was impersonal, intelligently critical and eager. Half of the boys would like to continue the experience next summer; all of them made the unqualified assertion that their summer had been valuable and that they were glad that they had had it.

## *Elements of Dissatisfaction*

"The greatest drawback was their inability to earn more money than they had. They were disappointed that they had not more to take home, as they were all trying to meet personal or family obligations. Most of them, I think all of them, believed that they could have earned more if they had worked in munition or machine shops; they believed that they could have cleared more in the city than they did on the farm. (See Page 17 for what they made.) They all seemed to feel that the experience had been worth the sacrifice but many of them felt that they could not afford to choose it for another year.

"In the discussion of wages and hours they all realized that the farmer had no margin in profits to go on; that he could not pay higher rates. Nor did they see how he could afford to increase wages by shortening hours on the two-shift or any other plan. Evidently there had been a great deal of discussion. Possibly they had accepted the opinions of their leader, but even if they had, that would not alter the interest-

ing fact that on whatever judgments they had relied or whatever observations had influenced them, nothing had affected adversely their impersonal interest in the question and their desire to discuss it. Farming was the uppermost issue in their minds.

"They said that the farmer was not a good instructor. They said that he feels he has a right to expect skilled work from men whom he hires for $1.50 or $2.00 a day; even if he knows when he hires them that they are not experienced he resents the time it takes to instruct them. He is very apt to leave them to discover for themselves how to do the task set for them. He will say, 'There is a field of cabbages to be weeded,' and turn his back on a boy who has never before seen a cabbage field.

THE BOYS AT CAMP LIBERTY ENLISTED FOR SERVICE THROUGH THE LAND

The boy, if conscientious, will spend his first day on a ten-acre field pulling out every blade of grass that he comes to. At the end of a ten-hour day, he has of course such very poor results from the standpoint of the farmer's necessity that the farmer considers him hopelessly stupid. The boys in talking about this did not resent it. They seemed to appreciate the humor of the situation."

We believe the causes of the boys' dissatisfaction cited above are important because they were genuinely felt. The abnormal conditions obtaining in industries at present make it difficult to estimate how far machine shops, ship-yards and munitions factories can outbid the farmer in wage offers to boys from 15 to 18 years during the coming summer

vacation. But it is evident that their claim to consideration on the score of national service may be rather more apparent to the boy.

The group of older boys at Camp Liberty were, as it happened, fellows of excellent ability and good education and there is no doubt that their earning capacity was quite beyond the opportunities the camp could provide. It was but natural they should feel the limitations of the situation and that their opinions should color those of the younger and less able boys. Moreover, it is almost too much to ask of adult human nature to gauge a question of this kind by savings rather than earnings, and we must not be surprised that their estimate ignores entirely the relative cheapness of the camp living, the absence of temptations to spend, and the saving on summer clothing and recreations for which their dollars would most certainly have gone in the city. They probably failed to make allowance, too, for any effect on the family budget due to their absence from home.

These facts must be remembered if we would appraise the situation fairly. We believe it is safe to conclude that the majority of the campers had as much money to show for their summer's work as they would have, had they worked in the city, while if we look beyond the unsettled conditions of the present to times of normal opportunity, the question of economic return from the farm camp assumes a more satisfactory aspect by comparison.

More serious are the farmers' causes for dissatisfaction. The boys' description of his limitations as an instructor strikes the heart of the matter. The camp at best could provide only unskilled labor and at prices nearly or fully equal to the wages received by the regular farm hand. Farmers are unused to organizing unskilled labor and have never developed their capacity to deal with it in ways calculated to obtain the best results.

The farm hand, too, demanded consideration. He resented the situation. His day was not limited to ten hours, he was expected to stay after work was done and help with the chores; employers did not trouble themselves about his transportation, he supplied his own on foot or on his bicycle. The question of equal pay seemed to trouble him less than the question of hours. Indeed it is doubtful if there had been a discrimination in wages and the boys had received proportionately less, whether the average farm hand would have felt that the conditions were fair.

Another cause of dissatisfaction to the farmer was the season. The city school year takes no account of the farm calendar. It was a fortunate incident merely that in the locality about Camp Liberty the season

when the boys' labor was needed began about the time the city schools closed, that is the first of July. At the end of the summer, however, the schools opened at the regular date and in spite of vague promises of co-operation earlier in the year, no concessions were granted to those members of the camp who would have been willing to remain and help with the harvest, so, after paying top prices for green hands and furnishing instruction through the summer, the farmers were left at the last with the hardest work of the year before them and their extra supply of labor gone.

## *Conclusions*

While fully appreciating these causes of dissatisfaction, we can not conclude that Camp Liberty was an economic failure because of them. There was a steady demand for the boys' labor from the opening of the camp, and at the end of the summer the appearance of the crops presented "a noticeable contrast to that of the neighboring sections where such help had not been available." On the whole we believe it evident that city boys can not be employed on farms to any better advantage than under such an arrangement where the camp life secures personal happiness and independence, and work is done in groups of two, three and four under the farmer's supervision. We believe, too, that Camp Liberty was economically as successful as were the camps where no conscious educational program was undertaken.

If local circumstances had not made a ten-hour working day imperative, educational activities could have been further stressed. With a working day of eight hours, the boys would have had time and strength for a definite program of instruction, and the content of the camp life might have been correspondingly enriched. This was the original plan of the Bureau of Educational Experiments, and the results obtained make only more evident the possibilities that could be developed with a more favorable schedule.

But the environment was educative in itself, and in spite of limitations we believe Camp Liberty succeeded in providing a life experience whose value to city boys and to their future citizenship is hardly to be measured in immediate returns.

From our experience we are inclined to doubt whether the boys' camp for farm labor can be advocated as an economic remedy of wide application in present emergencies. We can expect the farmer to use it only when other labor is unobtainable, or in specially favored localities where conditions permit some adjustment of the economic dissatisfactions we have described.

On the other hand, as a permanent feature of our educational institutions we heartily advocate the further development of such enterprises. It would be a national asset if such units could be undertaken each season in numbers sufficient to affect an appreciable percentage of our city youth. One has only to compare life at such a camp as this with that of one of the numerous recreation camps conducted for years by our private schools and settlements to realize its greater educational significance.

Further experience should indicate the best solution for the problems left unsolved—whether the boys should work in eight-hour shifts, or in a ten-hour day with fixed half holidays for rest and study; how far a program of study in the slack season between the middle of August and the last of September could be made an equivalent for absence from school in harvest time; how far the city high school can undertake to supplement the experience with courses of preparation and after instruction for those desiring them. The farmer, as the situation becomes an accustomed one, can undoubtedly make better use of such labor, realizing that it is there in quantity, available in the busy season for those who can organize and direct it.

Since Camp Liberty disbanded, a winter of shortage has brought with it a new realization of the dignity and place of productive physical labor in the world. The boy who weeded carrots last summer knows better to-day the relative value of that job and the one of clerk at the necktie counter. The productive impulse, responsible for Camp Liberty and similar enterprises, clouded though it may be by cross currents of habitual thinking and false evaluations, remains for all concerned the greatest educational factor in the experience, for it is indicative of the "permanent and fundamental need in all wealth production."

JEAN LEE HUNT,
Secretary, Department of Information.

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